2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH6 Yahgan SH6

881 head band and had a special painted staff. To each candidate were assigned sponsors, one or two men and a woman to the boy, one or two women and a man to the girl.

The candidates were subjected to certain endurance restrictions: little sleep, food, and drink, hard work, a daily bath in cold sea water, cross-legged posture during much of the time. They had to drink through a hollow bird bone. The boys were given a sort of temporary tattoo. Much vocational instruction was given, and particularly an elaborate moral instruction in the native code, with very concrete counsels on the obligations of altruistic behavior, respect for the aged, peaceableness, industry, not spreading scandals or carrying tales, and so forth. This moral instruction was given by the mentor, sponsors, [883] and other elders, as the will of Watauinéwa, the Supreme Being, who saw everything and who would punish delinquents with shortened life and with the death of their children. Yetāita also, the chief evil spirit, would harm them if they did wrong.

The ritual consisted otherwise mostly of dances and of songs peculiar to it. Toward the end, the sponsors gave each candidate a basket, a bird-bone drinking tube, and a scratching-stick. The rite ended with a mock battle between the men and women, and with a feast.

[884] Only those who had gone through the čiéxaus rite were considered full-fledged members of the tribe, and were told the whole mythological complex of the Yoálox brothers and their sister. And only twice-initiated boys could take part in the kina rite (cf. infra under Religion), whith was often held just after the čiéxaus.

876 **Death and burial.**—Mourning was expressed by fasting, body painting, gashing of the breast with sharp stones, and a special mourning dirge accompanied by a mourning speech. Angry complaints were directed to Watauinéwa for letting the person die. A general mourning rite in which the men and women painted themselves, wept, hurled complaints at Watauinéwa, and engaged in a mock battle, the men with clubs and the women with paddles, was also held.

The more common form of disposal of the body, up until recent times, was cremation—lest foxes, rats, or dogs should eat the body, so the natives said. The dead person's personal property, or some of it, was burned with the body. In some cases, especially of children, the body was buried in a kitchen-midden. The burial spot was avoided as a camping place, for several years where the deceased was an adult. The name of the dead was never spoken.

875 **Future life.**—The koshpik (késpix), or soul, flew east, but exactly whither was not known. Nor was it known what its fate was, happy or unhappy, nor whether such fate was at all dependent on moral behavior on earth.